Statement

Salient features of the Wildlife Conservation Strategy-2002 adopted by the Indian Board for Wild-life.

1. Wild-Life and forests shall be declared priority sector at the national level for which funds should be earmarked.
2. Law enforcement agencies must ensure that those engaged in poaching, illicit trade in wild-life and wild-life products, destruction of their habitat, and such other illegal activities are given quick and deterrent punishment.
3. The potential in wildlife tourism should be fully tapped, taking care that it does not have adverse impact on wild-life and protected areas. The revenue earned from increased tourism should be used entirely to augment available resources for conservation.
4. No diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes from critical and ecologically fragile wild-life habitat shall be allowed
5. Lands falling within 10 km of the boundaries of National Parks and Sanctuaries should be notified as Eco-fragile zones under section 3(v) of the Environment (Protection) Act and Rule 5 Sub-rule 5(viii) & (x) of the Environment (Protection) Rules.
6. Removal of encroachments and illegal activities from within forestlands and Protected Areas.
7. Settlement of rights in National Parks and Sanctuaries should not be used to exclude or reduce the areas that are crucial and integral part of the wild-life habitat.
8. More than 2000 vacant posts in the frontline staff of Protected Areas shall be filled immediately and provided basic infrastructure for efficient discharge of duties. Ban on recruitment of staff against vacant post should be lifted on lines with the Police Department.

Trade of animal skins

3979. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): DR. KARAN SINGH:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report appearing in the Times of India dated the 19th March, 2002, captioned "E-auction of tiger skin raises a stink";

(b) if so, whether Government have inquired into the illegal trade in tiger and other animal skins; and

(c) if so, the details of the findings of the inquiries and investigation?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BALLU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. One Shri Deepak 'Chandra of Meerut had listed a trophy of tiger on Bazee com in November, 2001 for Guinness book of records for having largest tiger skin. The Regional Deputy Director, Wild Life Preservation, New Delhi, conducted raid in the premises of Shri Chandra at Meerut on 8.3.2002 and found a mounted tiger skin displayed on the wall. On enquiry, it was revealed that Shri Chandra had an ownership certificate issued by the office of the Chief Wild-Life Warden, Uttar Pradesh. According to Section 43 of Wild-Life (Protection) Act, 1972, any person who has a wild-life article, duly covered by a certificate of ownership, can sell or offer for sale such article. As such Shri Chandra is not guilty of violation of Wild-Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

Monkeys in AIIMS compound

3980. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether monkeys have left their natural habitat due to massive depletion of green cover in South Delhi;

(b) whether trees in the AIIMS compound now give them a cover and there is always a danger of costly equipments getting damaged, with spreading fast infectious disease;

(c) whether the Ministry have received a detailed plan from some environmentalists early this year, to deal with the situation in a holistic manner; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to solve the problem on permanent footing?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Rapid urbanisation and house construction activities in South Delhi and adjoining areas have encroached upon the natural habitat of monkeys forcing them to live in human habitation. The tendency of providing food to monkeys by people leads to aggregation of monkeys around hospitals, offices and other public places. Possibilities of damage by monkeys to equipment etc. cannot be ruled out. A large number of monkeys suffer from Tuberculosis and therefore transmission of this disease to human beings is also possible.

(c) and (d) Dr. Iqbal Malik, a well known primatologist has submitted a detailed proposal to Central Government. The proposal has been discussed with Dr. Iqbal Malik and the Chief Wild Life Warden, Government of Delhi. The Central Zoo Authority has expressed its willingness to support the project subject to the availability of land by the State Government and agreement